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### **POVERTY POINT INSCRIBED AS WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

UNESCO's World Heritage Committee voted to inscribe Poverty Point State Historic Site as a World Heritage Site yesterday at its annual meeting in Doha, Qatar. Poverty Point is only the 22<sup>nd</sup> World Heritage Site in the U.S. and joins the ranks of others worldwide including the Great Wall of China, Stonehenge in England and the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt.

Poverty Point was the U.S. Department of the Interior's lone nomination for world heritage status—adding to the site's accolades as a National Historic Landmark, National Monument and Smithsonian Affiliate. The 3,400-year-old site is considered one of the most culturally significant American Indian sites in the U.S. Programs and tours at the site are offered daily and show visitors how life might have been for the prehistoric inhabitants of the area.

"This is a huge win for Louisiana. I don't think people realize how impactful this will be to northeast Louisiana's economy," Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne said. "The World Heritage designation solidifies Poverty Point as one of the world's greatest archaeological treasures, and we will work with surrounding parishes to provide early promotion of the inscription."

Poverty Point is the largest, most complex U.S. archaeological site of its age. No other site in the country matched its size until at least 2,000 years later. In addition to its impressive size and design, the site is outstanding because of its widespread trade network. The site's design is unlike any other site in the world, including a massive earthen complex, with six mounds, six concentric, C-shaped ridges and a large, flat plaza. Archaeologists believe Native Americans moved 25-million cubic feet of dirt to build the earthworks.

Pam Breaux, assistant secretary in the Office of Cultural Development, and Diana Greenlee, Poverty Point station archaeologist, represented the site at the meeting in Doha, Qatar. Lt. Governor Dardenne appreciates their commitment and praised archaeologist Nancy Hawkins and State Archaeologist Chip McGimsey along with the entire division of archaeology and the Office of State Parks who worked on this designation for several years.

“Louisiana’s natural environment made these accomplishments possible. This site flourished long before Indians in this area grew corn or raised animals. People lived by hunting, fishing and gathering wild foods that are a part of the bounty of our state,” State Archaeologist Chip McGimsey said. “The location also allowed for long-distance canoe travel using the region’s network of waterways.”

Later this year Lt. Governor Dardenne along with the Office of Cultural Development and the Office of State Parks will host officials from the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of State to celebrate the site’s inscription.

Poverty Point State Historic Site is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$4 and provides access to the area museum, video and seasonal tram tour. Children under 12 and senior citizens are admitted free. Poverty Point is located in West Carroll Parish, east of Monroe, on La. 577. For more information, visit [www.LaStateParks.com](http://www.LaStateParks.com) or call 888.926.5492.

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